

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons therefor;

(c) the details of increase in population during each of the last three years in comparison to the earlier decades; and

(d) the effective steps taken to check the increase in population?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY) : (a) and (b) No method-specific target for population control has been fixed in the country since 1st April, 1996. The system of setting targets from the Centre is replaced by a system of decentralised participatory planning approach at the grass root level to give more emphasis on quality of care and client's satisfaction. In respect of performance of family welfare programme though performance in the first year of target free approach (1996-97) compared with that of previous years was slightly lower; in the current year, it is showing an increasing trend.

(c) The annual exponential rate of growth of population during the decades 1971-81 and 1981-91 was 2.22 per cent and 2.14 per cent. However, as per Sample Registration System (SRS) estimates, the natural growth rate of population has since declined to 1.94 per cent., 1.93 per cent and 1.85 per cent during the years 1994, 1995 and 1996 respectively.

(d) The programmes of Department of Family Welfare are aimed at stabilising the population of the country at a level consistent with the requirement of national development. The use of contraceptives and terminal methods is being conversed with citizens in the reproductive age group for avoiding unwanted pregnancies and facilities for reproductive and child health through the State Health Systems are being provided for improving the reproductive and child health status of mothers/children which would keep the families small in the long run. The Reproductive and Child Health Services are proposed to be substantially improved and strengthened during the 9th Plan and availability of contraceptives will be improved by strengthening arrangements for social marketing of contraceptives. Panchayat Raj Institutions are proposed to be closely associated with the Programme.

[Translation]

Shortage of Blood

*16. SHRI DATTA MEGHE : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is considerable shortage of blood in various Government hospitals in the country; and

(b) if so, the details of programmes started by the Government for encouraging the people to donate blood voluntarily?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) There is an overall shortage of blood particularly contributed by voluntary donations. As per WHO norms of 6-16 units (average 10 units of blood per hospital bed per annum), the requirement for about 6 lakh hospital beds in the country comes to about 60 lakh units per annum. At present, the total estimated collection of blood is about 30 lakh units per annum. There is, therefore, an overall shortage of blood to the extent of 50 per cent at the existing level.

In a recent Supreme Court Judgement in the public interest litigation between "Common Cause versus Union of India and others", the Hon'ble Supreme Court has issued a number of important directions with a view to co-ordinate all the blood banking activities addressed to handling of blood and ensuring its maximum safety. One of the important directives of the judgement is to put a stop to professional donor system within two years. To achieve this objective, we have to mobilise voluntary blood donation programme so as to make sufficient blood available as per requirement from voluntary donors. Central and State Blood Transfusion Councils have been set up as autonomous bodies to oversee the management of blood transfusion services in the country and promotion of the voluntary blood donation programme.

For generating much needed blood from the voluntary donors, our strategy is to motivate the people to come forward to donate blood voluntarily and at regular intervals. The Government of India have taken up a number of steps in this direction as per details annexed.

While it is important to raise the collection of blood, it is also essential to ensure proper and appropriate use of scarce blood. In today's medical programme, one unit of blood collected can be given to 7-8 patients by separating into components. The Government have set up 40 blood component laboratories all over the country which would make components available. A Plasma Fractionation Centre has also been set up at Bombay.

Promotion of Voluntary Blood Donation

For generating blood through voluntary blood donation programme, Government of India have taken a number of steps as follows:

1. A campaign has been launched for motivating people for donating blood voluntarily through specially developed TV spots telecast through Doordarshan at suitable intervals during prime time.
2. Messages are broadcast on voluntary blood donation through Times FM channel in one of their music programmes.
3. National AIDS Control Organisation with the help of Central Health Education Bureau have developed proto-type Information Education and Communication material for one to one communication on Voluntary Blood Donation Programme in the form of folders, posters and stickers and the same have been given to various States and UTs for use and reproduction in local languages.
4. National Council for Science and Technology Communication (Department of Science and Technology, Government of India) have initiated a pilot project for generating voluntary blood donation in 50 selected cities, with a view to fill up the gap between demand and availability of blood through voluntary donations.

The specific objectives of the project being:

- (a) To address existing myths, misinformation and inhibitions regarding blood donation from the minds of people through awareness campaigns;
- (b) To train communicators to motivate healthy people to become voluntary donors.
- (c) To develop computerised system for networking information about voluntary donors and operating blood banks.

Department of Science and Technology have intimated that studies have been initiated in 10 cities for determining the status of blood collection etc. The assessment of the software available for motivation the voluntary blood donors has been completed and proposals for developing new software have been taken up. Apart from this, training modules for motivators are also being developed. Proposals for computerised system for blood banks and networking have also been received from various organisations and are being examined.

Some of the activities included in this programme pertain to development of software (films, slides, posters etc.) for propagation of voluntary blood donation messages, training of communicators, creating database for networking of information etc.

5. Every year, 1st of October, is celebrated as the National Voluntary Blood donation Day. Special campaigns to educate the masses on the need for voluntary donation of blood is undertaken through mass media and special camps for blood collection are organised.
6. A number of steps have been proposed for undertaking an extensive programme for Voluntary Blood Donation. A Committee of Experts have been set up to prepare a Comprehensive National Blood Policy and to work out a mechanism for the promotion of voluntary blood donation programme on an all India basis. A scheme is being framed under the National Blood Transfusion Council for undertaking extensive training programmes for community leaders including school/college teachers, trade union leaders, prominent citizens etc. to train them as motivators for encouraging voluntary blood donation.

[English]

Relations with Myanmar

*17. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any complaints from the Myanmar authorities about incidents on the border between India and Myanmar at Moeh in Manipur;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the Government's reaction there to?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI):
(a) to (c) The Myanmar authorities have conveyed to Government their deep concern over the incident on 12th Oct., 1997 in which 365 shops at Namphalong market at Tamu on the Myanmar side of the Indo-Myanmar border, opposite to Moreh in India, were reported to have been burnt down, and three persons including one Myanmar immigration official were injured. The Government of Myanmar have complained that Kuki insurgents were involved in the incident and that they entered Myanmar from Moreh and later returned to the Indian territory. Government have also seen reports that the so-called Kuki National Army has claimed responsibility for the incident.